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Title : Need for Central intervention to stop the construction of a dam across the river Paalaru by the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI P. MOHAN (MADURAI): Sir, The people of Tamil Nadu are shocked and agitated about the unilateral decision of the Andhrapradesh Government to go ahead with the construction of a dam across Paalar River despite the opposition from all the political parties of Tamil Nadu and the Government of Tamil Nadu. The public particularly the farmers and the political parties are greatly agitated and has given rise to tension between people of both the states.

Traditional cultivable lands to the tune of about 1 lakh 50 thousand acres of lands in the three districts of Vellore, Thiruvannamalai and Kanchipuram are irrigated by the River Paalar. Apart from this Paalar is the only drinking water source for municipal towns like Vellore, Katpadi, Kanchipuram and Chingleput and also Chennai, the capital city of Tamil Nadu. About a crore and half people depend on River Paalar for their drinking water needs. If the Government of Andhra Pradesh goes ahead with the project, the irrigation and drinking water supply would be seriously hampered.

River Paalar that originates in Kolar district of Karnataka flows through Karnataka for about 9.0 kms and then through Andhra Pradesh for a mere 33 kms and runs to about 222 kms in Tamil Nadu before it could flow into Bay of Bengal near Cuddalore in Tamil Nadu.

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*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil

According to 1892 agreement, which covers fifteen inter state rivers that include River Paalar also, there is a clear mention that lower riparian states must be consulted before any dam or barrage construction in the upstream is to be taken up. The Government of Andhrapradesh has not obtained the consent of Tamil Nadu and has ignored the letter from Tamil Nadu in this regard. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has not sent any reply to the Govt. of Tamil Nadu till now. Apart from that it has been stated that the proposed site where a dam is to be raised come under Central Reserve Forest area. As a reserve forest, that area comes under the Union Government and no state can take a unilateral decision without the consent of the centre. Hence I urge upon the centre to intervene and prevail upon the Govt. of Andhra Pradesh not to go ahead with this unilateral decision to construct a dam across River Palaar.